(c) Internet services were affected for 192 hours at Bastar, Dantewada, Kanker, Raigarh & Jashpur Districts.

(d) Urgent actions were taken to rectify the faults and set right the services from time to time. Migration of subscribers from VSNL servers to National Internet Backbone (NIB) has been completed.

Upgradation of Branch Post Offices in Punjab

†1188. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for upgradation of branch post offices in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof district-wise;

(c) the number of branch post offices functioning in the State at present, district-wise;

(d) whether Government have received any application for opening of branch post offices in the State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and by when a decision would be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION AD INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The following four proposals for upgradation of Branch Post Offices are under consideration:—

i) Fatehgarh Pajtoor, District Moga.
ii) Mehraj, District Bathinda.
iii) Baradwal, District Sangrur.
iv) Bhuchokala, District Bathinda.

(c) District-wise number of Branch Post Offices functioning in the State at present is given in statement-I (*See* below).

(d) and (e) The opening of new branch post offices, in response to 7 representations received so far and mentioned in statement-II is subject to the fulfillment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources.

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†. Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement-I

The District-wise numbers of branch post offices functioning at present in Punjab

Sl. No.	District	No. of Branch of Post Offices
1	Amritsar	384
2	Bathinda	134
3	Faridkot	64
4	Ferozpur	261
5	Fatehgarh	75
6	Gurdaspur	229
7	Hoshiarpur	298
8	Jalandhar	256
9	Kapurthala	102
10	Ludhiana	282
11	Mansa	86
12	Muktsar	119
13	Moga	112
14	Nawanshahar	147
15	Patiala	165
16	Ropar	144
17	Sangrur	235
	TOTAL:	3093

Statement-II

Details of Applications received Till Date for Opening of New Branch Post Offices in Punjab

Sl. No.	Name of place	District
1	Chehalwali	Bathinda
2	Sainikhurd	Faridkot
3	Kala Bhaiyan	Jalandhar
4	Dago	Ludhiana
5	Chuharwali	Jalandhar
6	Khadauli	Patiala
7	Kaharpur	Hoshiarpur

VSNL Services

1189. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have permitted the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited to provide National Long Distance (NLD) free of cost;

(b) if so, whether the VSNL would get licence of NLD free of cost;

(c) whether any decision for inviting final bids for VSNL disinvestment has been taken; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Sir, grant of licence for National Long Distance services to VSNL is a part of compensation package on account of preponing of demonopolisation of VSNL over International Long Distance (ILD) from 1/4/2004 to 1/4/2002. Under this package, VSNL is liable to pay the licence fee, both by way of entry fee and revenue share for operating national long